

17/12/20

**R132 Consultation and Observation document on behalf of Cllr Dean Mulligan**

It is vital to note with due respect to the warranted need to develop the R132 dual carriageway appropriately. I think we need strong consideration with respect to the intention of the scheme. This project is essential in terms of the NTAs plan for this area. In developing such, -we need to be cognisant of and acknowledge the works that Bus Connects and Metro intends to develop at this location. Thus, in as much as possible the project should reflect the aspirations and desires of both into consideration. However, we can not be remiss in the real and potential infrastructure failings that could be posed of public transport projects are not carried out in tandem with the R132 development.

**Infrastructure in conjunction with public transport development:**

There is every possibility and eventuality that this scheme will be developed far before the public transport infrastructure in which the core design principle for this project serves is operational (namely Bus Connects and Metro Link). In that sense, we need to be cognisant of the “unavoidable” traffic implications that will occur for vehicular traffic if reduced to one traffic lane. Whilst this is considered unavoidable, we need to make every effort to make the distributions to cars as little as possible. In that vein I would ask:

***When Bus Connects and Metro are both operational:***

1. That designated Bus Lanes are specified during specific hours only, allowing cars flow freely in both lanes during hours where the bus lane frequencies, congestion and usage is not deemed constant. (We cannot ask drivers to sit in and create traffic in one lane at all hours of the day whilst not using lanes available if there is not a frequent and considerable flow of buses consistently in the lane designated). Particularly outside of peak hours and weekends.
1. (a) Alternatively, we could develop a bus and taxi priority corridor which would give such vehicles right of way and priority in the lanes at all times but would not hinder the distribution of traffic between both lanes where feasible.

***Pre-Bus Connects and Metro whilst not operational:***

2. To propose, that if this project is developed particularly prior to bus connects project, that in this instance the bus lane specified is always allowed continue to facilitate vehicular traffic. Given the present structure of the road design would not be feasible to significantly reduce vehicular traffic, in a situation where the public transport is not up to the same standard. Where buses are continuing at their current frequency on the R132 which is minimal when compared to Main Street Swords. It would be unrealistic until Bus Connects strategy is rolled out or Bus routes altered to the extent that they would utilise this road in a considerable fashion.
2. (a) To propose that lanes where increase in Bus traffic but not rolling out Metro and/ or Bus Connects. In this instance during peak frequency and continuation flow of Buses that lanes be segregated only during times of peak usage, to encourage fair, safe and appropriate traffic flow which will continue as car enter the desired lanes at each junction. With minimal impact to buses.

3. With due consideration to Metro and Traffic lanes, would it be viable to have a double cycle lane to the west with additional 7 metres of open space rather than on both sides, given the option to create another auxiliary traffic lane for vehicles?

#### **4. Impact from auxiliary roads and other connectivity from the wider North County:**

It can not be underestimated the impact that feeder roads and other areas apart from Swords have on the R132. This is a major access and connectivity road for North County Dublin. This is not only a stretch of road that must be used from Swords to access the Motorway to the North, but also links Swords to all towns to the North. N.B.

- If anyone access Swords from the North county they will in nearly every instance access the R132 at one point, unless coming from Oldtown, Garristown and Ballyboughal which have equal distance to Swords and motorway access is not required to save time. In every other instance the R132 is required to access Swords.
- The Swords area and this project is set out to be a connectivity hub on completion of Metro-Link and Bus Connects, this road will be utilised, and vehicular traffic will be constant. Even on completion of Bus Connects thousands of individuals will travel from much of the North County via the R132 in both directions to across work further afield.
- The proposal notes how Swords has a need for enhancement and public transport infrastructure, this is very true. The rat race and dangers posed on the roundabouts and junctions serving the R132 is apparent for all road users to see.

That said with due consideration to the aforementioned, this road is used by the entirety of the north county to some degree.

#### **5. Congestion from immediate feeder roads:**

The R132 between the Pinnock Hill and Estuary roundabouts is a bypass for Swords, it is utilised as such to avoid MainStreet, unlike the public transport at present which in the main enters and exits at different spines of the road or junctions.

Issues of concern:

- A massive issue for the area at present is the traffic demand and impact that the feeder roads pose on the R132. Any motorist utilising the motorway from airside will understand that it is a walking pace from the R132 at (Pinnock Hill, Airside Premier Inn, Kinsealy, Mountgorey via Malahide road) junctions in the morning. The same can be said on exiting and accessing their home via (Pinnock Hill, Airside, Kinsealy, Mountgorey via Malahide road) junctions from the Swords exit on the Motorway in the evening, Mountgorey particularly is like a car park.
- The issue essentially is, we do not have appropriate access to the wider areas of Dublin which are employment hubs outside of the city centre via public transport, and where we do the access to and from extraordinary slow and in the main not a viable alternative to the car. Unfortunately, even Bus Connects will not assist any works going to west Dublin (Blanchardstown, Lucan, Clontarf etc) from Swords and it reduces transport to the East (Clarehall, Portmarnock, Howth etc).
- Seatown and the Estuary in the evening rush, as it stands, the left lane is backed up due to traffic turning onto the R125 as the Balheary road junction is also backed up. With the ever-

increasing development continuing to the northwest of Swords this problem is only going to get worse.

- The R132 is essentially a road that in many instances is a necessary road to cross or travel when travelling from south or north west Swords to the motorway, or to the East in any direction, as such we can not underestimate the use of this road and we need to be cognisant that the culture change required, in line with public transport alternatives is likely not achievable before the construction of this road ends and Bus Connects and Metro Link are operational.
- Essentially much of the required connectivity to get people out of their cars is likely not to be tackled, I raised the same with Bus Connects.
- The issue of access to and from Swords and the role the R132 plays cannot be underestimated the current roundabouts act as a headache and delay traffic from minor roads significantly as traffic pace and flow is in no way consistent from all directions.
- The upgrade of signalised junctions will help in access and flow but it will slow down junction arrival, thus create a built up in the same manner, I worry about the capacity of the roads feeding the R132 at present I would not care to imagine them if this project goes ahead, with one vehicular lane if the public transport projects which is a core guidance document is not complete in tandem it will have major undesirable consequences for the area.

#### **6. R132 connectivity project expanded:**

A few considerations which need to be addressed aside from the above, taking the project as presented are:

5. Upgrades to Mountgorry Way as a signalised junction if any works are complete or changed that impact on the Drynam road.
  - (a) From speaking to residents in Foxwood, Drynam Rd, and surrounding areas, an access route to the Malahide Rd and/ or the R132 is desired and required. Hence a Cul De Sac is not the best option. As is, there is a parking problem in Foxwood, Ashley and around Commons East with cars being left for the day by staff from the Pavillions and possibly commuters.
  - (b) The loss of the junction will have a detrimental impact to residents of this area, real appropriate traffic management approaches need to be incorporated, the residents need full and appropriate engagement in the next planning stage so that the appropriate solution can be developed regards parking issues on street in Foxwood and surrounding estates. This has been an ongoing issue for years if this project goes ahead these residents can not be left behind. At this stage, a preferred option can not be reached in terms of a consensus, largely due to covid19 restrictions and the impact it poses re in-depth consultation outside of online fora.


#### **Other issues:**

6. In addition to toucan junctions, the footbridges at present should be retained and improved.
7. Given the concept of roundabouts allows for U-turns which is often a required vehicular movement and not simply an adjustment based on a mistake in most cases, can we identify points where U-turns can be considered viable.
8. Look to facilitate and create junctions that are optimum in terms of best practice to facilitate cycle, pedestrian, and vehicular movements.

9. If this project is successful and a multi-model hub is in essence created as Park and Ride for Metro-Link and the corridor is expands the bus routes we need to be cognisant of this and our capacity to deal with such along with the current requirements and specific desire to get people out of cars where viable.
10. It is very important to emphasis the Bus Connects acknowledge that their main Bus Corridor for Swords to City Centre, is starting south of this project, before the Pinnock Hill Junction, the additional bus lanes may not we frequented in the manner that would justify them as a constant stand alone travel lane and this should be reconsidered in line public transport frequencies and projected congestion on the road which is unavoidable.
11. I also think an additional arm to the Motorway Bypass which links to Kinsealy or Malahide road would clear significant traffic entering or passing through this road. It is common to have arms off a motorway exit to assist the driver in going a specific direction, rather than the current one way exit in Swords which congests traffic going in all directions, at peak times.
12. Be mindful of any road improvements which may be hampered or undone by metro particularly in zones where it crosses the median, rather than when it is proposed to the east of the carriageway, also to be mindful that a new and updated design from metro-link due next year may look very different.

**Signed:**

**DEAN MULLIGAN**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dean Mulligan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.